



DISASTER NEWS

Economic Injury Loans for Small Businesses

Date: July 20, 2004
Release Number: 04-188

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SBA ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOANS AVAILABLE FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

FORT WORTH, TX -- Businesses in some Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming counties can now apply for low interest Economic Injury Disaster Loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). These loans are available to help businesses meet normal operating expenses that cannot be met due to the effects of a disaster. Severe drought that occurred January 1, 2004, and continuing, caused many farmers and ranchers to experience reduced incomes which may have had an adverse economic effect on businesses depending upon these producers. Farmers and ranchers are not eligible for this loan program but may be eligible for disaster assistance through other Federal agencies. However, nurseries that are victims of drought disasters can apply. Businesses in the following counties are eligible to apply:

Nebraska:

Arthur	Dawes	Garden	Keith	Perkins
Banner	Dawson	Gosper	Kimball	Red Willow
Box Butte	Deuel	Grant	Lincoln	Scotts Bluff
Chase	Dundy	Hayes	Logan	Sheridan
Cheyenne	Frontier	Hitchcock	McPherson	Sioux
Custer	Furnas	Hooker	Morrill	Thomas

South Dakota:

Fall River

Wyoming:

Goshen

Laramie

Niobrara

To obtain an application or receive additional information, interested business owners may call the SBA toll-free at 1-800-366-6303 or TDD 817-267-4688 for the hearing impaired. The deadline for filing an application is **February 22, 2005**.

Due to the weather, many producers experienced crop losses and were not able to purchase goods and services at normal levels. Businesses that are dependent upon these producers may have experienced decreased sales, reduced gross profit margins, increased accounts receivable or difficulty in moving inventories at normal levels. The loan can help a business meet installments on long-term debt, accounts payable and overhead expenses that would have been met had the disaster not occurred. Refinancing of long-term debt, however, is not eligible under this program. The loan is designed for those businesses with substantial disaster-related needs and is intended to supplement monies the business owner can provide from other sources.

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Loans may be approved for up to \$1,500,000 for actual disaster-related financial needs of the business. Interest rates are 3.061 percent and terms may extend to thirty (30) years, depending upon the repayment ability of the individual applicant. To qualify, businesses must be small by SBA's size standard. Businesses which can meet their financial needs through other sources are not eligible.

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For more information visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster.